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TOURS TO CHINA

ANNCR: AMERICAN TOURISTS HAVE SHOWN AN INTEREST IN VISITING THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. AS A RESULT, PAN AMERICAN WORLD AIRWAYS, THE INTERNATIONAL AIRLINE, IS OFFERING AMERICANS EIGHTEEN PACKAGE TOURS TO CHINA IN 1978. VOA'S SIDNEY PAUL HAS THE DETAILS:

VOICE: THE EIGHTEEN TOURS TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA FOLLOW PAN AM'S "INAUGURAL" PACKAGE TOUR TO CHINA LAST DECEMBER. THE AIRLINE HAD RECEIVED CHINA'S PERMISSION TO SELL ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY SIXTEEN-DAY VISITS TO CHINA. JAMES FANNAN, DIRECTOR OF PAN AM'S TOUR DEVELOPMENT, SAYS THAT TRIP WAS UNIQUE BECAUSE NEVER BEFORE HAD SUCH A LARGE GROUP OF WHAT HE CALLS "GENERAL CONSUMER" AMERICANS (ORDINARY TOURISTS) GONE ON SUCH A MULTI-CITY TOUR OF CHINA. PAN AM FLEW THE AMERICANS TO HONG KONG, WHERE THEY BEGAN THEIR TRIP TO CHINA BY TRAIN.

PAN AM QUIETLY MAILED ANNOUNCEMENTS OF THE DECEMBER TRIP TO AMERICANS WHO TRAVEL FREQUENTLY OVERSEAS. MISTER FANNAN SAYS THERE WAS AN ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE:

TAPE: CUT ONE -- FANNAN

"WE RECEIVED AN EXTRAORDINARY AND IMMEDIATE RESPONSE -- IT WAS IN THE THOUSANDS. THE RESPONSE HAS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE -- OVERWHELMING. AT THIS LATE DATE, STILL FROM THAT ONE MAILING, AND THE PUBLIC RELATIONS THAT FOLLOWED AFTER THE TOUR -- WE CONTINUE TO BE BESIEGED WITH TELEPHONE CALLS AND LETTERS FROM ALL OVER THE UNITED STATES."

VOICE: THE AMERICANS WHO TOOK PART IN PAN AM'S "INAUGURAL" TRIP TO CHINA WERE CHOSEN ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SEVED BASIS. UNLIKE MOST OF THE AMERICANS WHO HAVE BEEN VISITING CHINA DURING THE LAST FEW YEARS -- EITHER SMALL GROUPS OF SPECIALISTS OR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS -- THE DECEMBER VISITORS WERE TOURISTS REPRESENTING WHAT PAN AM'S DIRECTOR JAMES FANNAN CALLS THE MAINSTREAM OF AMERICA -- PROFESSIONAL AND SEMI-PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE, SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS, CLERGY MEMBERS, EDUCATORS, ARTISTS, HOUSEWIVES AND THE LIKE.

BECAUSE OF THE SUCCESS OF THE "INAUGURAL" TOUR, SAYS MISTER FANNAN, PAN AM NOW HAS PERMISSION TO OFFER EIGHTEEN MORE AMERICAN PACKAGE TOURS TO CHINA. ALL TOLD, IN EXCESS OF TWO THOUSAND AMERICANS WILL BE ABLE TO GO.

THE ITINERARIES OF THE TOURIST TRIPS TO CHINA WERE ARRANGED BY BOTH MISTER FANNAN AND CHINESE OFFICIALS. MISTER FANNAN HIMSELF WAS THE TOUR GUIDE DURING THE "INAUGURAL" TRIP, WHICH INCLUDED STAYS IN HONG KONG, CANTON, HANGCHOW, SHANGHAI AND PEKING.

TAPE: CUT TWO -- FANNAN

"WE WERE ACCORDED A GREAT DEAL OF FLEXIBILITY IN WHAT WE WANTED TO SEE, AND THE MEANS TO SEE THE VARIOUS SUBJECTS THAT MOST OF THE PEOPLE WERE INTERESTED IN. WE HAD A VERY VARIED ITINERARY. IT INCLUDED NOT ONLY VISITS TO HISTORICAL PLACES, SUCH AS 'FORBIDDEN CITY,' THE MAIN TOMBS -- WE SAW MORE OF A CONTEMPORARY LIFESTYLE IN VISITS TO THE COMMUNES, THE SCHOOLS, THE FACTORIES, THE MEDICAL FACILITIES -- WE VIEWED AN OPERATION USING ACUPUNCTURE. BUT, BY AND LARGE, I THINK THE MOST LASTING IMPRESSION WAS THE DEGREE OF FRIENDLINESS THAT THE OVERWHELMING NUMBER OF CHINESE PROFESSED TO US ... OR EXTENDED TO US."

VOICE: MISTER FANNAN SAYS AMERICANS WANT TO SEE CHINA FOR MANY REASONS -- FROM A PROFESSIONAL INTEREST TO A SIMPLE DESIRE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE GENERAL LIFESTYLE OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. THE PAN AM OFFICIAL SAYS HIS AIRLINE HAS RECEIVED REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION FROM PEOPLE OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES ABOUT THE TOURS TO CHINA. BUT, MISTER FANNAN EXPLAINS, THE PACKAGE TOURS -- FOR THE PRESENT -- ARE RESTRICTED TO AMERICANS.

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